Czeżowski on Wild Quantity

GEORGE ENGLEBRETSEN

In [2] Czeżowski argued for a view similar to one held by Leibniz (see [4]) and, most recently, extensively defended in one version by Sommers (for example: [5]-[10]; something like it is also suggested in [1], pp. 239-241). It is the view that singular propositions are logically formulable either as universals or as particulars. Sommers calls this "wild" quantity. Czeżowski intended to substitute this view for the traditional, scholastic view that singular propositions are logically universal. They are so considered because their subject terms are distributed. Czeżowski presented reasons for thinking that singulars might also be construed particularly. He wrote:

> Thus singular propositions may be said to be a kind of hybrid; they have in common with universal propositions that they are subalternant to particular propositions and belong to the field of the relation of contrariety; while by their subalternation to universal propositions and by belonging to the field of the relation of subcontrariety they are akin to particular propositions. . . . A singular proposition may be interpreted either as universal, in view of its being subalternant to the particular, or as particular, in view of its subalternation to the universal. If one of the two contradictory singular propositions is interpreted in the first manner, then the other must be interpreted in the second. [2], p. 394

To summarize, singulars can be viewed as universals because: (i) they are subalternant to particulars, and (ii) they have contraries. Singulars can be viewed as particulars because: (a) they are subalterns of universals, and (b) they have subcontraries. Moreover, given any contradictory pair of singulars, it must be the case that one is universal and the other is particular.

Both the scholastics and moderns like Czeżowski and Sommers want the same thing—a categorical formulation for singular propositions. Why else would one seek a tacit quantity for singular subjects? Czeżowski summarized the logic of singulars in his "hexagon of opposition".